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## Clothing for Special Occasions

292 Both men and women wore special clothes for festivals. The dress of the man for sports contests consisted of the malo of pandanus or the malo of sennit, or both. A non-contestant might also wear a poncho-like garment called *la kupenga*, and a sennit malo with attached feathers. The sennit malo (*malo kewa*) and the pandanus malo (*malo kie*) are described elsewhere (pp. 133, 146). Both are worn for wrestling contests, formerly also in warfare. The sennit malo alone is worn for other contests like spear throwing. The method of donning the two malos (*pelu te malo*) is as follows:

First each fringed edge of the pandanus malo is turned in to make a longitudinal fold about ¾ inch deep. The malo is then folded longitudinally a second time along the mesial line so that the final width of the malo is about 3½ inches. An assistant takes the malo at the middle section and passes it round the waist from back to front crossing the two free ends above the navel. The malo is pulled tight; one free end is passed down over the genitals, through the legs, and brought up the back to hang over the shoulder. The other free end is brought up over the chest and also hung over the shoulder. The assistant takes the commencement end of the sennit malo, places this loop over the pandanus malo at the navel, and winds the sennit malo round the waist on top of the free end (thus burying it) and over the pandanus malo. Five or six transverse turns are made down, then a similar number of turns made up and over the first turns. The assistant continues to wind the malo round the waist until the twisted sennit end is reached. This end is passed down on the outside of the transverse turns, pushed under, and brought up underneath the transverse turns and over to the front again. The free end is pushed through and caught over the downward turn of the sennit cord, pulled tight, and the free end passed along the malo for about 8 inches, and bound round it again. This binding is continued until the transverse turns of the sennit malo are secure, the free end of the binding cord being fastened with a knot to the last transverse binding. One free end of the pandanus malo is now brought down from the front shoulder, passed down over the sennit malo, pushed up and underneath the sennit, then obliquely down and under again, continuing to bind the pandanus malo round the sennit malo until the middle of the back is reached, when the free end of the pandanus malo is tucked under the sennit. At the back, the second free end of the pandanus malo that has passed through the legs is similarly bound round the sennit malo and worked round to the front where the free end is tucked under the sennit malo. Depending on the length of the pandanus malo, the binding turns will be spaced or contiguous. For composite dart throwing contests, the sennit malo alone is girt on as described. One man always helps another to gird on either malo. An alternative method of donning the two malos is given by Macgregor (20, p. 48 and pl. 4).[1]

292 There is a reference in a chant to a malo termed *malo hula*. Informants 285 could give little information about this garment, though they suggested it was not necessarily worn by the chief alone but might be worn by any man who was fortunate enough to own one. It consisted of the ordinary five-ply sennit braiding, but at each twist of the braiding, the quills of small red feathers were inserted and caught by this twist. The name of the bird from which the feathers were obtained had been forgotten.

292 [765] Some braided five-ply malos were formerly made from human hair, possibly the hair of a beloved child who had died. Presumably these malos

1. [See 2: McGregor, pp. 48, 52-- 4 malos.]

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No other sites visited revealed stones. Informants stated that during early missionary days, the stones were removed to build a causeway across the taro swamp, to make walls for stone houses, and to burn for lime, which, mixed with sand, provided the mortar for the new stone houses.

The pattern of low-walled, oval or circular religious enclosures with a central stone representation of a god is an unusual development in Polynesia and recalls the structures that Gill described for Niutao in the Ellice Islands which he visited in 1872. Gill mentions that the stone representative of the god Tangaloa was a plain upright slab. The religious structure adjoined the burial ground (a common Pukapukan pattern) and consisted of "an oval low enclosure, composed of flat stones, some higher than others, each representing a distinct divinity, so that the sacred men standing inside the enclosure—the people of course outside—could worship all the gods at once" (12,p.14). It is unfortunate for comparative study that Gill did not particularize these religious enclosures in more detail.

Commemorative stones, marking the shrine of an ancestor god on a sacred clearing (*yiouga*), consisted of a single upright stone set in the ground, or else several stones set on edge to form a rectangular structure two or more feet square, the enclosure being filled in with coral gravel. This type of commemorative shrine was similar to the seats (*potu*) of the priests in the god house (*uale atua*) and also to the low seat that was set before the stone representative of the god on the religious structure.

## Graves

Formerly each cemetery was surrounded by a low, rectangular wall (*paspas*) of coral stones which demarcated the area set aside by the people of a lineage as their burial place. The area varied in size according to the numerical size of the lineage. Most of these walls have fallen into decay, but are observable on some cemeteries removed from the village. The stones are about 3 inches above ground and are undressed coral of different lengths and thicknesses.

Outside these walls are observable the stone *paspas* that marked the foundations of old houses of mourning (*uale matenga*). On one foundation are still seen the holes into which the wall posts of the house fitted; on another, rotting wooden posts from the dismantled house are lying on the foundation.

Within each cemetery, the graves are of three types: the modern Christian, enclosed, boxlike grave; the rectangular, open grave accorded formerly to people of rank; and the two-stone grave accorded formerly to commoners (pl.2,*B*).

Former custom was to bury with head to the east, feet to the west. Graves of chiefs (*alihi uolo* and *mui alihi*) were marked by eight stones—two at the head, two at

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that the husband would not dare to come to her as long as she remained with his *wale atua*.

In the relationship of two *wale atua*, the wish of one is always acted upon by the other; it is even equivalent to a command that may not be disobeyed. A sure way for a boy of former times to get an unwilling girl to marry him was for the boy to work for the girl's *wale atua*. No word was said about courtship, but the male *wale atua* knew that the boy wished to marry his female kinswoman. If he was pleased with the boy, he sent a message to the girl, telling her to marry the boy; a girl would rarely disobey this command from her *wale atua*. A girl might similarly court a boy by working for his female *wale atua*. Even today, where a boy or girl voluntarily works for *wale atua*, people know he or she is trying to force a marriage with the related *wale atua*, though today the wish of the *wale atua* is not so unhesitatingly obeyed as formerly.

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The death of one *wale atua* is the occasion for the display of unceasing affection by the surviving *wale atua*. Some of this affection may be real, brought to high tension by the repression of strong avoidaness; some of it may be due to cultural fiction. When the *wale atua* is dying the other *wale atua* may be present and is allowed to talk to, embrace, and weep over the dying relative. (See p. 299.) It is appropriate for a surviving *wale atua* to mourn for a deceased *wale atua* for a period that would be considered extreme for other relatives. As informants put it, the surviving *wale atua* mourns more for a dead *wale atua* than for husband, wife, father, or children, and this is not considered excess of emotion. There is no ideology, however, of the relationship of *wale atua* in the Underworld, and informants were at a loss to know how they would behave to each other when they met there. Similarly, at parting, when one *wale atua* leaves the island to go away, it is considered proper for the *wale atua* to break the tapu at this time, to embrace and mix their tears. The parting may be until death, hence an approximation to death behavior is in order.

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The tapus between *wale atua* come into operation when the young people become sociological adults (*wakatane* and *wakawaine*). Before this time the two kinsfolk are considered children unable to understand the kinship tapus. Hence they may eat, live, and sleep together in the same house. In theory, the two *wale atua* are taught at the time of puberty the kinship tapus that they must observe toward each other, but presumably the educational process is spread out over a longer period—otherwise the validity of the tapus have little opportunity to be established. A grown female may be present at the birth of her younger male *wale atua* and take care of him during infancy and childhood; similarly the older male *wale atua* may care for his younger female relative. Friendly, non-tapu relations are maintained between the two until the younger of the pair reaches puberty, when all connection between them ceases and the strictest tapu is established.

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When the adopted (*hoko*) child joins his new household group, he becomes a *wale atua* of the children of the adopting parent's sibling's descendants. Other things being equal, he ceases to regard as *wale atua* those children who would have been his *wale atua* had the adoption not occurred. This follows from the fact that the *hoko* child is in the "as if" relation of blood child to the adopting parents.

605 The actual operation of the *wale atua* relationship was observed in the case of Eliu and Lotoa (p. 239):

> Lotoa is some years older than Eliu. She lives directly opposite him, across the village road. The two never come closer to each other than the width of the road. They never talk to each other. Should both be sitting outside their houses, they never look at, or face, each other. We asked Lotoa to cross the road one day to the rear of Eliu's house where light was favorable for taking photographs. She refused for a long time, and only came, in the end, when Eliu retired to a safe distance, and her husband persuaded her that it would not matter for once. Immediately the snapshot was taken she hurried back to her own house and sat with her back to us. Veti, Lotoa's husband,

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764 more logical to bury the corpse with the head facing this direction. It is likely, I
775 think, that the idea of the corpse facing the west is a survival of the common Polynesian
171 concept that the point of departure for the soul on its way to the Underworld is always to the west.

764 After the corpse is covered with the coral and sand dug from the grave,
574 a food division is made among all the people who attended the wake whether
[245] or not they brought food or special gifts for the corpse. Where the ceremony is on a large scale, all the people in the village of the chief mourners send nuts to the deceased to enable his family to make a large food division in keeping with its dignity. Further nuts are obtained by stripping the row or rows of coconut trees planted round the border of each cemetery, reserved for use in death divisions and tapu for ordinary purposes. They are called *niu wakavale* (nuts to tame) with the idea, informants suggested, of taming or satisfying the spirit of the dead person, who would not go to the Underworld happy unless he knew that honor had been satisfied by a food division among all those who had attended his wake. For an especially impressive division, pigs, fish, and prepared talo are also divided among the mourners.

965 The close bilateral relatives of the deceased formerly remained at the cemetery to watch the grave for a period of one or two moons. This mourning period was termed *taupo*. The mourners lived in a permanent house (*wale matenga*, death house) built in each cemetery. The relatives ate and slept by the grave, watching over it continually. The men might leave for a time to fish, the women to get talo which they prepared in a cook house (*wale imu*) close to the death house. Relatives brought food at regular intervals to the mourners. Between the two big cemeteries of Muliwutu and Matanga lineages in Ngake there is a pile of *Tridacna* shells, a sort of midden heap, approximately 20 feet long, 10 feet wide, and 4 feet high in some parts—silent witness of the many years these cemeteries have been in use and of the popularity of clam flesh with mourners. Throughout the period fresh nuts, fish, and talo for the soul to eat if it came back at any time from the Underworld were hung up outside the house of mourning by cords tied to the eaves purlins. It is evident that thieves might sometimes steal this food, for there is a special name, *tangata kaiyopu*, for such a thief.

On the second or third day after interment the mourners beautified (*wahalelei*) the grave by spreading over it white coral pebbles carried in coconut baskets (*kete*) from the outer beaches. These pebbles were not replaced when they became weather-worn and grey. The work on the grave completed, a food division, called *puyio wale*, was made by the deceased's relatives among all those who attended the mourning, sat with the corpse, or (today) helped to build the coffin, dig the grave, carry the corpse to the grave, or beautify the grave.

When the deceased's closest relative felt that the mourners' hearts were

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cleansed of overwhelming sorrow and that they were sufficiently calm to return to everyday life, he announced that the mourning (*taupo*) period would end on the following day. A small feast (*lulukunga*) was held at the grave by the immediate family of the deceased for the friends who had supplied the mourners with food. The party then broke up without ceremony to return to the village. There was no further attendance on the grave. If another relative had died while the mourning party was at the cemetery, they continued in residence for a further period. According to Veti, some mourning parties resided in a cemetery for six to nine moons at a stretch.

Mourning periods were sometimes concluded with a seclusion (*kaitau*) followed by a wrestling contest. When the mourners left the grave, they selected young men of the paternal lineage, married and unmarried, to go into the house of seclusion (*uale kaitau*, see p. 282) for one moon to be fattened for the wrestling. On leaving the house of seclusion at the end of the period, the men paraded through the villages issuing the customary challenge. The match which followed brought the mourning period to a close.

## Death of a Chief

Formerly special procedures followed the death of the chief. The following material refers especially to the supreme chief who lived in Loto, but informants said that similar procedures might be followed for the chiefs of the other villages as well as for the sacred maid.

The deceased chief was taken to the place on Loto beach called Te Ava-o-te-upe, bathed, and then taken back to his house. The body was smeared with scented coconut oil, dressed in the ordinary short death malo made by the women of the chief's household, and adorned with ornaments. Even if the chief died under suspicious circumstances, no post mortem examination was held. "If the body was dead, it was dead, and there was nothing more to be found out about it," is the way informants expressed the matter. The corpse was laid out, the wake began. The people of the island came to pay their last respects to the dead chief, bringing with them death gifts, as a last farewell (*teakotuna*) to the chief. Watching beside the corpse were two girls of the paternal lineage (*fa*) of the chief. They were called *taute* (guardians). Each girl held in her hand a burning stick of *fautua* wood called *te auvi o Matangi* (the fire of Matangi). As each mourner came forward to present his gift and to smell (*tongi*) the corpse, the guardian pressed the brand against his flesh. To show his intense love for the dead man the mourner was required not to flinch at the impact. A mourner who could greet the corpse ten times and withstand ten burnings was known to have tremendous love (*alea*) for the chief, whereas the man who shrank away from the impact of the torch obviously had little love for his chief. The mourners recited chants for two or more days and nights if the chief had been beloved in life, for a shorter period if not. The chief mourner was the deceased's sacred maid.

The chief's grave, unlike the grave of an ordinary person, was dug very deep, down to water level. For interment the body was bundled in mats brought as death gifts; the other gifts were placed inside the bundle, and the whole secured with a large covering, such as the sail of the chief's canoe. Trussed with numerous transverse turns of sennit, the bundle was described by informants as "looking like a long cigar-shaped bundle (*sui*) of Samoan tobacco." Strong men picked up the body, raised it above

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mourners placed the stones (p. 161) round the grave and returned to their houses. There is no record that a seclusion (*hoitou*) was ever held in conjunction with the mourning for a chief. There was no tapu period after his death for the general populace: mourning observances were carried out by the close relatives of the chief without affecting the people of the island.

### Accidental Death

The body of a person killed by falling from a tree, by lightning, or any other mishap on Motu Ko or Motu Kotawa is taken back to Wale for burial in the lineage cemetery. At the place of the accident a second grave is dug, filled in again, and marked by stones. This is the grave of the spirit that is supposed to linger about the place of death. The gravestones (*mauli ola*) serve as a memorial (*wakamailongo*) to the accidental death (*mate yili*). When formerly the spirit of one accidentally killed later visited a kinsman in a dream, the deceased became an ancestor god (*atua tangata*) of his paternal lineage, and the gravestones served as a shrine for the god. A sacred clearing (*yionga mate*) was made between the shrine and the beach as a tapu place reserved for the god.

The recovered body of a man drowned at sea is buried like any other. But a man drowned at sea whose body is not recovered, is commemorated by a gravestone (*mauli ola*), which is set up over a grave for his spirit on the beach opposite the place where he was last seen. His relatives hold a wake in his house and then go to mourn briefly at his gravestone. His grave would also be a shrine if he became an ancestor god. If they did not become gods, men who died at sea and whose bodies were not recovered became ocean spirits or else the ancestors or relatives of fish and other sea animals. Nothing is known of the Samoan custom of catching an animal or insect in a mat and burying this in the grave in place of the body.

Men killed by reserve land guards for violating the tapus of the reserves were usually interred in graves dug at the place of their death. Because of the intimate tie between cemetery and paternal lineage, burial in any other place than the lineage plot was a degrading fate for any man.

### Present-day Practice

Today those death customs no longer followed out in full have been modified without altering the general pattern. Mourners do not live at the death house for the mourning period. Instead one or two relatives keep watch over the grave during the day, returning to the village to sleep at night. All the immediate relatives go to live in the house of the deceased for a month or more to mourn (*taupo*). Most of them merely sleep in this house, going home to eat during the day. In line with the withdrawal of mourners from village activities in former times, the chief mourners today refrain from going to church for several weeks after the deceased is buried.

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## WARFARE

There is no record in Pukapuka of pitched battles between opposing groups, or of warfare existing within the social structure of a definite institution. The atoll was too small, the total population too few, and the amount of available land too little for institutional warfare to have developed. Informants definitely asserted that warfare was unknown on Pukapuka. They were correct in one sense, but the existence of weapons and stories about fighting shows that the island was not always at peace. Fighting incidents in stories of the fighting at Waletoa (p. 389), the fighting against Yangalipule *po* (1), the fighting of Tuiva against the men of Yato (p. 395), the fighting against Uyo (1), and the fighting of Te Nana in Yayake (p. 403) reveal that such fighting was caused by violation of the tapu of the reserves, quarrels over food divisions, personal rivalries, quarrels over division of the reserves, and like matters. The fighting that occurred rarely rose above the level of brawling, but where a pitched hand-to-hand contest resulted, much blood seems to have been shed for little cause. The number of deaths in these contests seems to have been increased by the fact that losers habitually committed suicide by having relatives bury them alive.

The following customs relate to fighting:

At a meeting for the discussion of highly controversial matters, a net of *uulo* bark was hung on the beach nearby as a warning to all to keep the peace. Anyone wishing for violence had to declare his intentions by tearing down the net, which not only provoked secular violence from opponents but also punishment from the gods for violating the tapu of the net.

A man prepared for fighting by tying up his long hair and girding on his two malos, the malo of sennit and the malo of pandanus. The double-wound coils of sennit round waist and abdomen served as protective armor for the vital organs against spear thrusts. There is no record of body painting or decoration.

Weapons were kept in the sleep house on the platform, laid across the tiebeams, or in the armory house (*wale lakou*). Each of the principal paternal lineages possessed its armory, a house of the *wale wakoyawoo* type. Some such houses were built on the boundary of the principal cemetery of the lineage; others were close to the principal god house of the lineage. In this house the men of the lineage and the sub-lineages stored their heavy spears and clubs, keeping at home only smaller weapons like fish-bone knives. The armories were not tapu; anyone might visit them at any time, and they were kept in good order by the attendants of the god house. The weapons were stored in these houses on platforms, leaving the ground space clear for use by overflow mourners from the mourning houses when many people of the lineage stayed at the cemetery during a period of mourning. In case of alarm, a man girded on his malo at home, picked up his smaller weapons, and ran to the armory of his lineage to select suitable spears and clubs. He might, in dire need, steal a weapon from an armory not belonging to his own lineage, provided he could gain access to it.

Immediately following a war alarm or the sighting of foreign vessels offshore, the priests of the lineage went to the religious structure (*awanga* ye) of the lineage, tied coconut leaves to the stone of the god, and prayed for success in the coming meeting. Where the men of Wale supported the high chief of the island against a group bent on antisocial ends, the chief went to the sacred enclosure to pray to the goddess Tuna, who,